

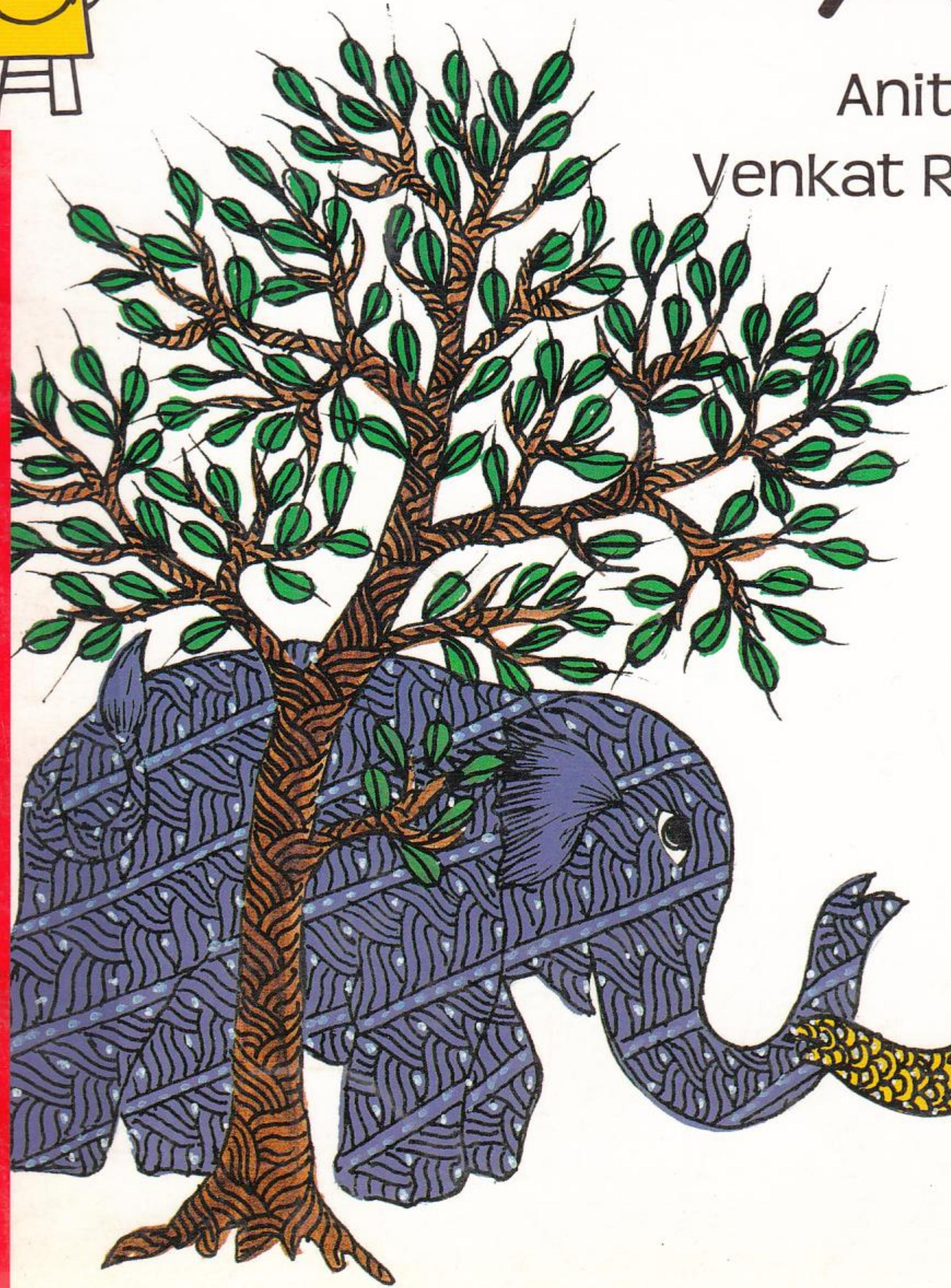
Pathfinder

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Ambili

Anita Vachharajani

Venkat Raman Singh Shyam



LEVEL 2



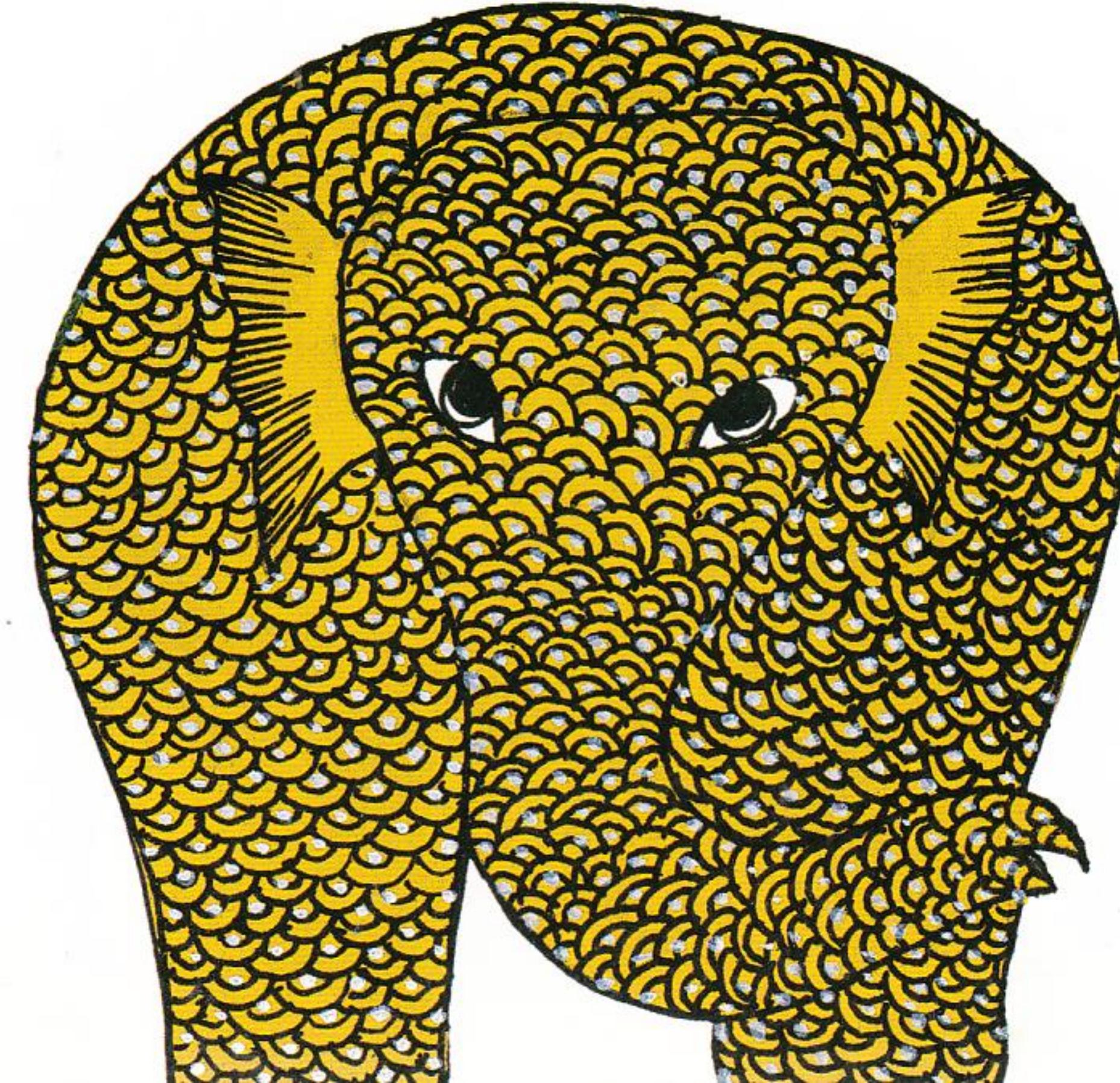
Ambili

Written by
Anita Vachharajani

Illustrated by
Venkat Raman Singh Shyam

9530 -

गुरु नाहालपुरा मंडी
गिरवारै बालभवन
त्रिपुरा



One morning in a forest in Kerala, Elsie Mol, a cow elephant, gave birth to her first baby. It looked like a wet little bundle – with a small trunk and a head round as the moon. Elsie Mol rubbed her baby gently with her trunk, soothing its wet body. The baby wobbled to its feet and waved its short trunk slowly.

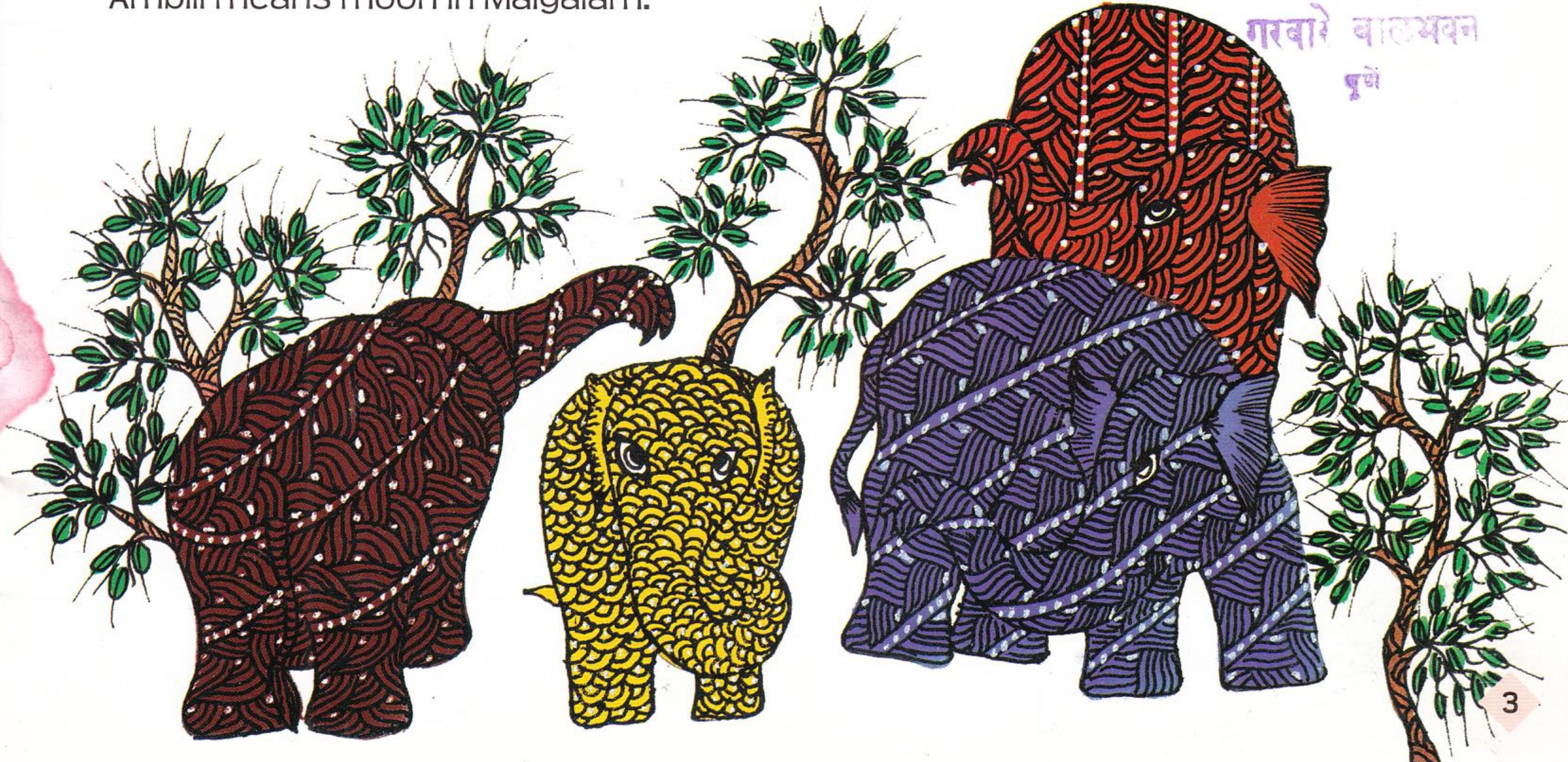


Elsie's sisters gathered around her, making sounds that were rumbly but still very gentle. "What will you call her?" asked one.

Elsie looked at her baby's perfectly round head. It was as lovely as the moon. She needed a name that was just right for a beautiful baby elephant which was round and as perfect as the moon. "I'll call her Ambili*," she said, "like the moon."

*Ambili means moon in Malayalam.

गुरु नहानारकालीन
गरवारे वालभवन
पृष्ठे



Ambili is a tall cow elephant herself now, with a little calf of her own. But when she was just four days old, something funny happened to her. I know it's true because she told me all about it herself. And when I tell you the story, you will know that even wise elephants can be silly at times.

You see, on the fourth morning of Ambili's life, the sky suddenly grew dark with fat clouds. Ambili looked up with a start. Where was the sun?

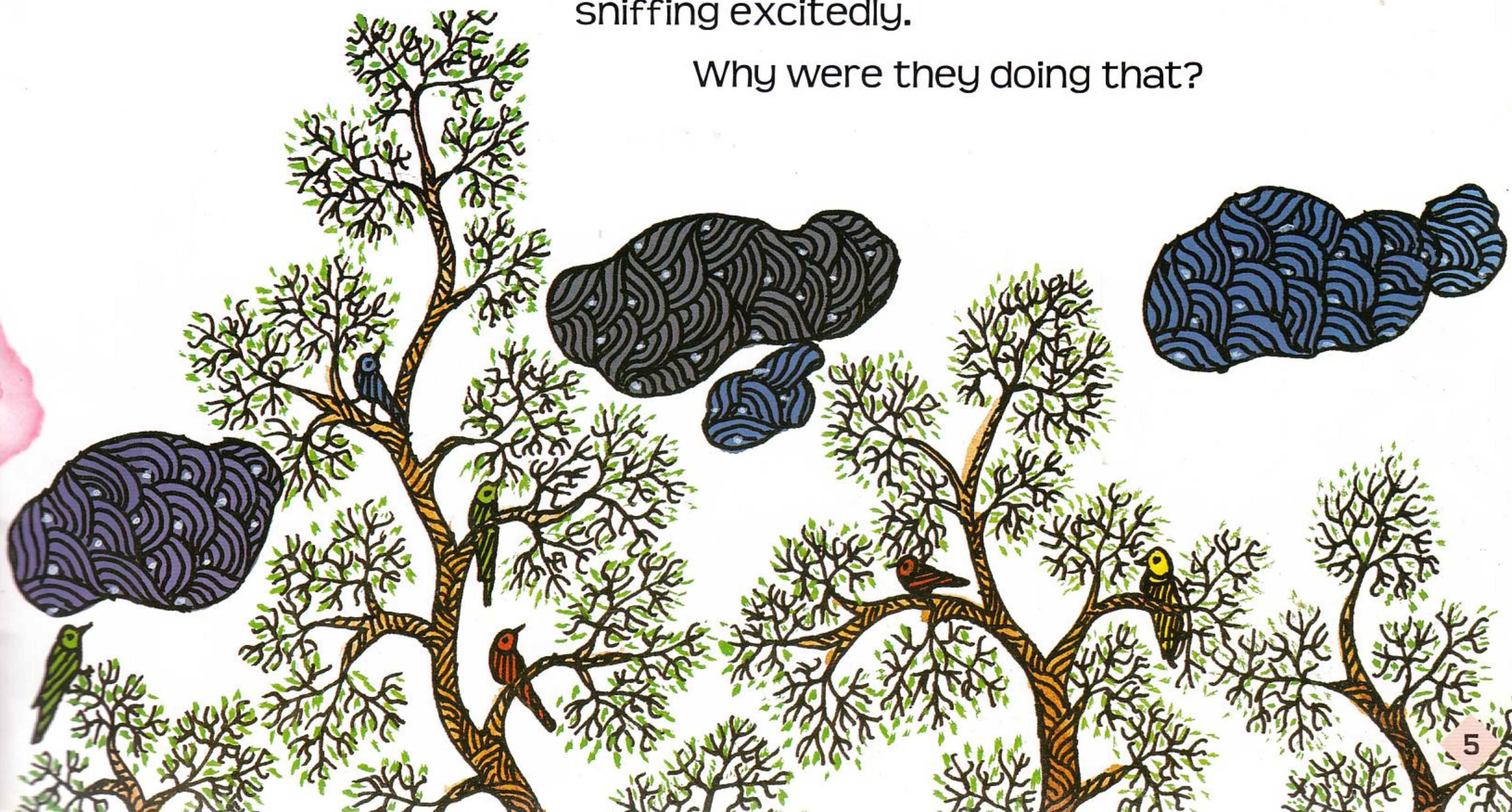
The forest was silent except for the loud WHOOOOOSH of the



cold wind. For a few moments, everything was quiet and still. Nothing moved. Only the wind blew, whipping around like it was in a tearing hurry to go somewhere. It was as if the forest and its creatures were all waiting for something to happen. Ambili looked around her nervously. What was going on?

Her mother and her aunts had their trunks up in the air and were sniffing excitedly.

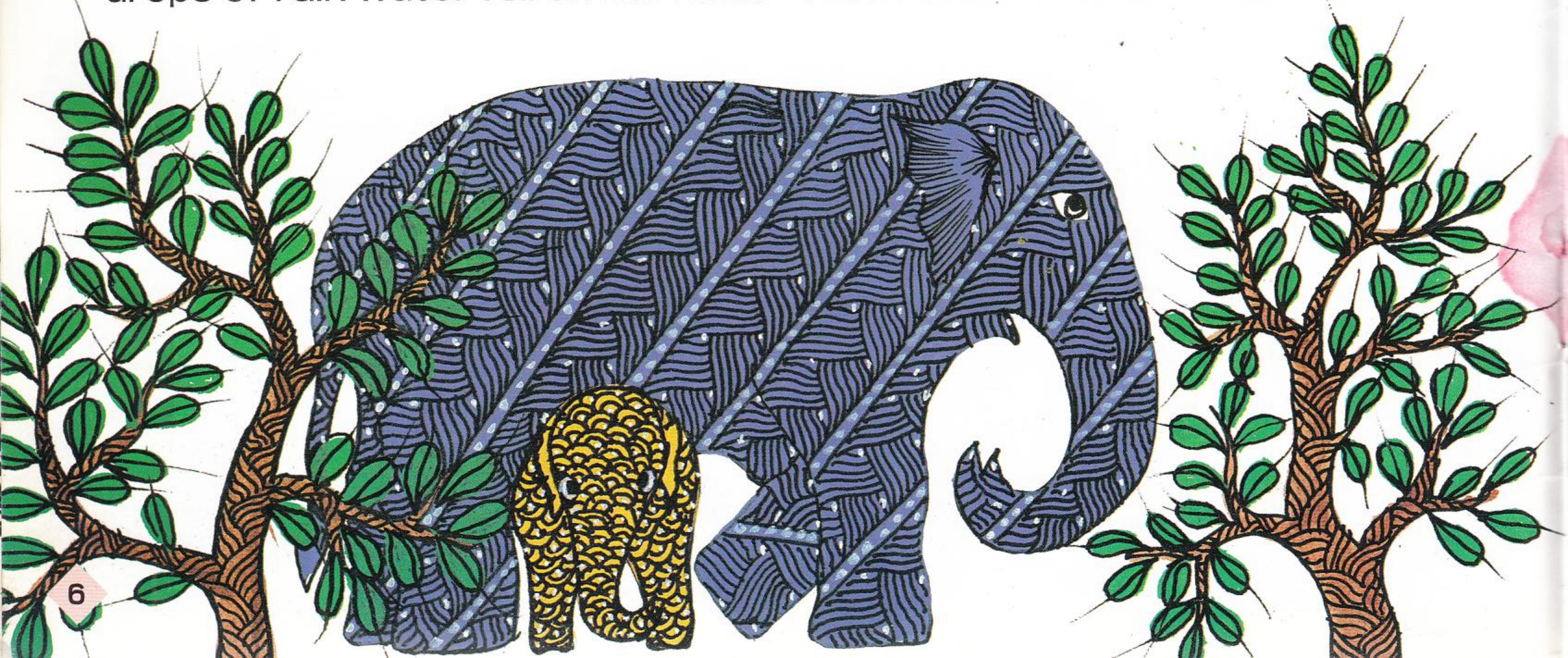
Why were they doing that?



Then it happened. Something wet and cold and sharp fell on her head. The cow elephants trumpeted joyously. Ambili darted fearfully under her mother's stomach and watched in wonder as sheets of water fell from the sky.

"Come out, Ambili," came her mother's rumbley voice, "It's just rain!"

So that's what it was, thought Ambili. Rain. Whatever that was. Ambili peeped out slowly. She blinked her eyes in surprise as big fat drops of rain water fell on her head – PLIK! PLOOK! The water flowed



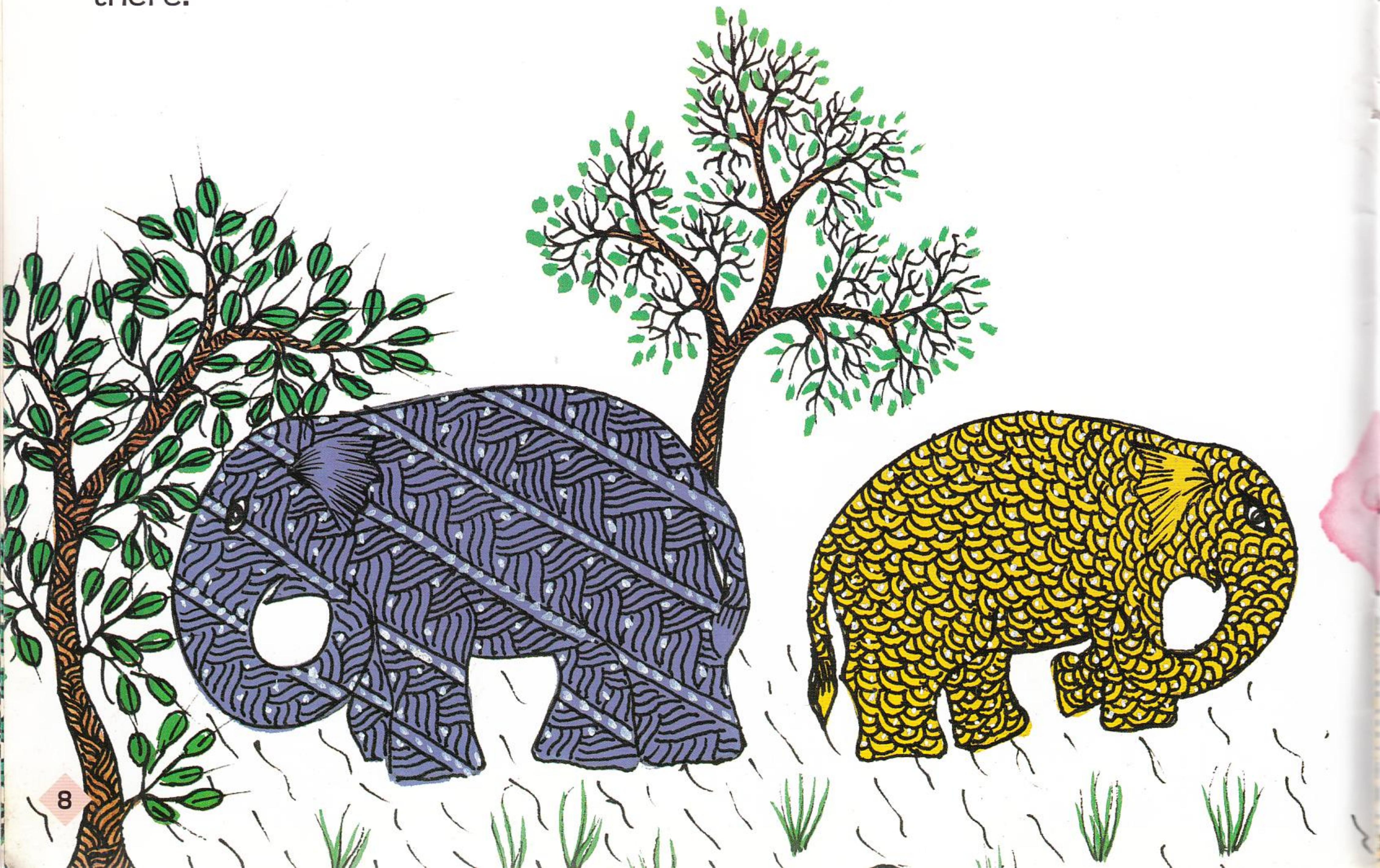
down her cheeks and trunk, and ran in little streams down her wrinkly skin. Little Ambili felt very, very cold.

Her mother and aunts trumpeted loudly. PRUWANH! PRUWANH! Elephants love the rain, you see. But little Ambili wasn't sure she liked it at all.

The cold wind blew and it rained harder still. Elsie and the other cows stood in a circle. The cool rain splashed on their heads. They pushed their babies out into the rain. The other little elephants came out slowly, but Ambili tried staying firmly under her mother's large tummy. She wanted to be safe and dry.



All of a sudden, Ambili heard a noise. 'DRRRIBIDICK!' She gave a startled little jump and turned around because the noise seemed to come from somewhere just beside her. Something strange awaited her there.



On a wet, brown stone sat a fat, shiny animal. It had a wide grin and kept hopping around on the rock. The rainwater splashed off its green skin. The yellow and black spots on its body glittered. The animal stared at Ambili with its big bright eyes and grinned some more.

“TRRRUACK!” it said. “Hello, Baby Elephant!”

Ambili was nervous, but she still did not like the way the thing called her a baby.

तुम सहानुभव दो अक्षर
गरवारे वालभवन
तुम्हे



“Don’t call me that!” she said. “I’m four days old!”

“Four days old?” said the thing with a large grin and a wink. “Wow! TRRRRUBIDICK! That’s a lot!”

Ambili asked, “Who are you?”

“RIBBDICK!” said the creature. “Four days old and you haven’t heard of me? Huh! My name is Maakadi the frog and I’m the king of the forest. You must bow before me... like this...” He bowed low to show her, touching his forehead with his paw in a smart salute. He looked funny, but Ambili didn’t dare laugh. After all, he was the king of the forest. So she touched her forehead with her little trunk. She also gave him a quick little bow.



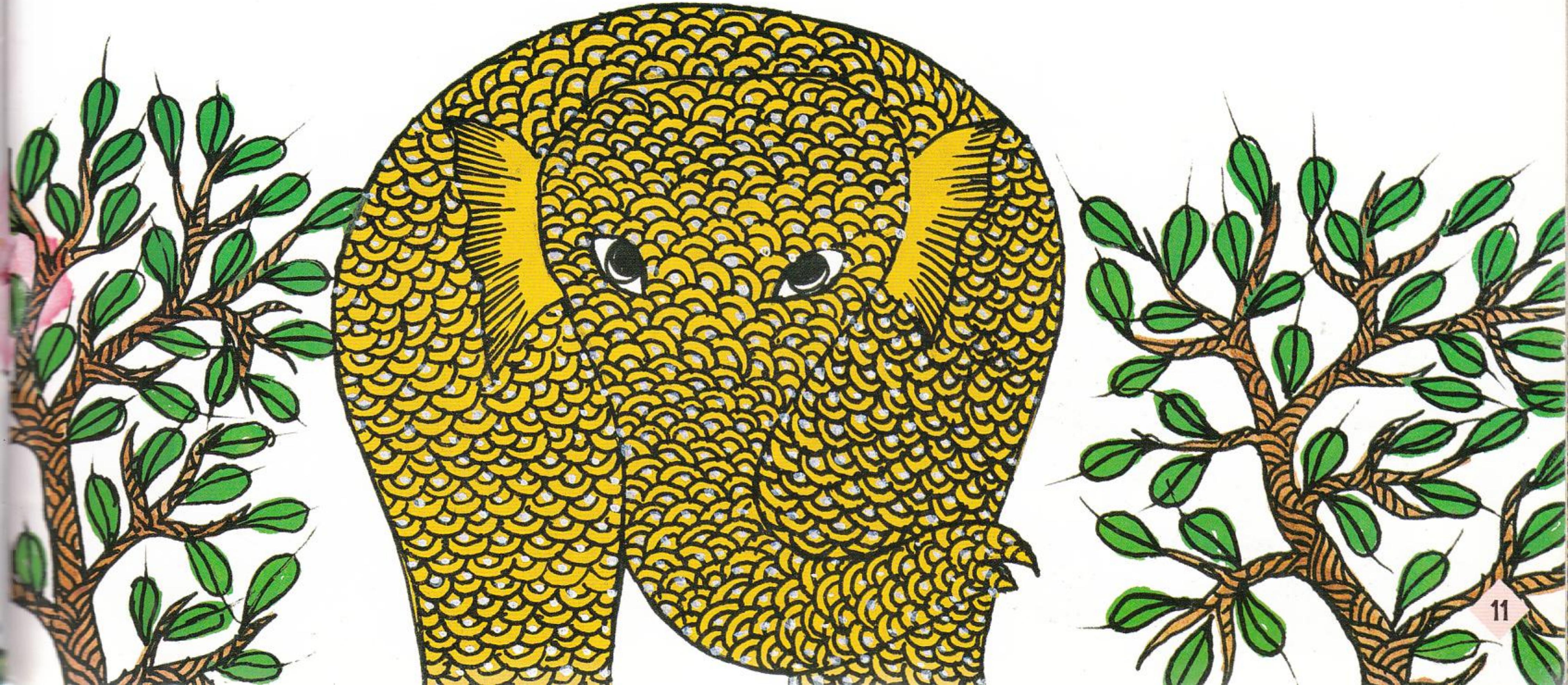
"That's good! What is your name?" asked Maakadi.

"Ambili," she replied. Then a thought struck her. Had he made all this strange stuff fall from the sky?

"Er..." she said. "May I ask you something?"

"Of course!" said Maakadi grandly, his chest swelling a bit with pride. "Ask me anything... I know all the secrets of the forest!"

In a small voice, Ambili asked, "Then, what is this?" With her trunk, she jabbed at the air and pointed to the rain.



"This? Why, you silly thing, it's just r..." Maakadi stopped suddenly. The little elephant was scared of the rain. Now he'd have some fun! Maakadi looked grim. He said, "It's just something I do when I'm happy. I call it rain." Ambili nodded her head. There was that word again. Rain.

Maakadi continued in a deep, serious voice, "I'm the king, you see.



All I have to do is look up at the sky, say a magic word, and down comes the water. It's great when I'm feeling hot."

Ambili's tiny round eyes grew rounder than ever before. "Ohhh!" she said. "Then... cou-could you make it stop?" She asked in a little voice.

"Make it stop?" Maakadi looked surprised.

Now Maakadi couldn't do that. No one could. Not even the tiger, the real king of their forest.

9530

दुष्ट नहाना परवाना
गरबारे बालभवन
पृष्ठे



He thought quickly and said, “Oh yes. Of course I can! For someone like me, it’s easy! I can make it stop any time I wish to. But I love the rain. I like to play in the rain, to hop around and to... CRRRUACK!” His throat swelled up and he let out a dreadful croak! Ambili jumped back a little.

“Listen, elephant,” said Maakadi “The rain is fun, don’t you see? It is cool and wet, and... and... oh...! Look around you. Every forest creature loves the rain. Come! I’ll show you.”



He moved away. Then he stopped and turned. Ambili had moved up a bit. She leaned forward, watching him.

“RIBID! RIBID!” He cleared his throat.

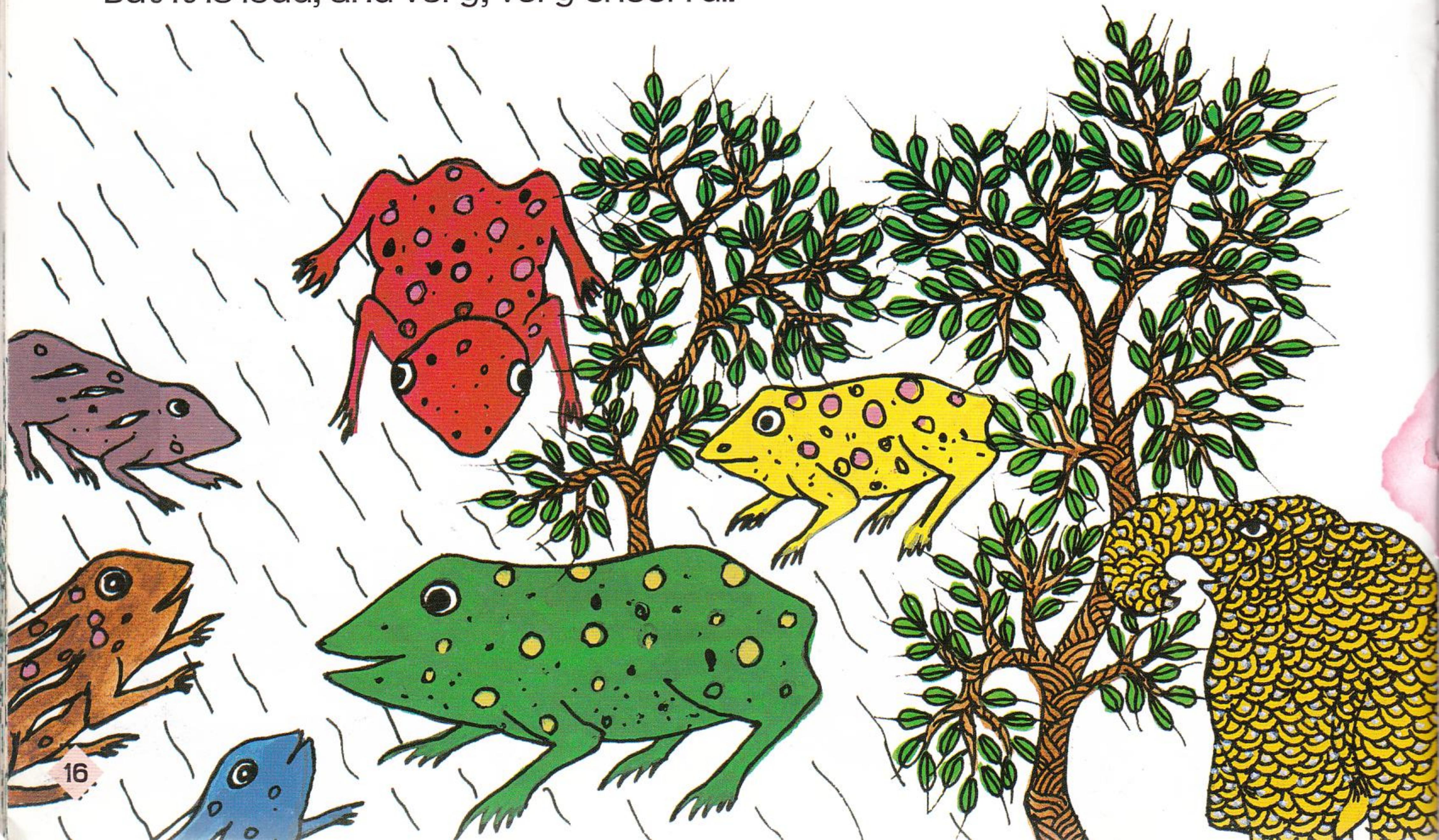
“RIBID! RIBID! RIBID! RIBID!” All of a sudden there were at least ten frogs around them. They all cleared their throats.



And then Maakadi and the other frogs did what all frogs think they do best. They began to sing.

“The Rain! The Rain! The Rain...!”

Now, a frog has a really unusual singing voice. It isn’t sweet, oh no. But it is loud, and very, very cheerful.

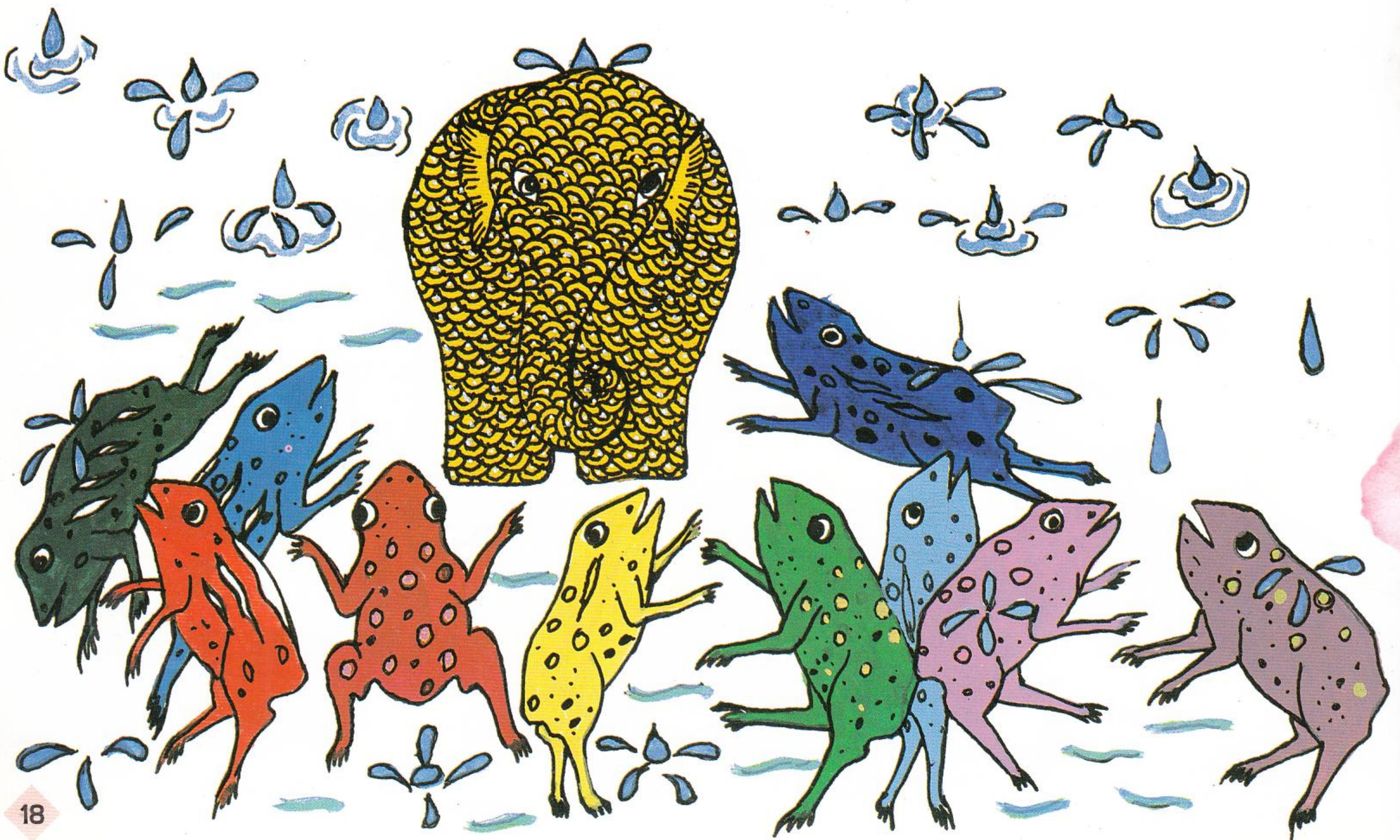


All the ten frogs sprang up and down and up and down. Ambili stared.

PUCK! The mud splashed under them. PLUCK! PLICK! PUCK! All around her were fat frogs, leaping and hopping and jumping. Wet mud splashed on to Ambili's trunk and face. But she was too surprised to mind. She watched in wonder as the singing frogs did a hippity-hoppity dance around her.



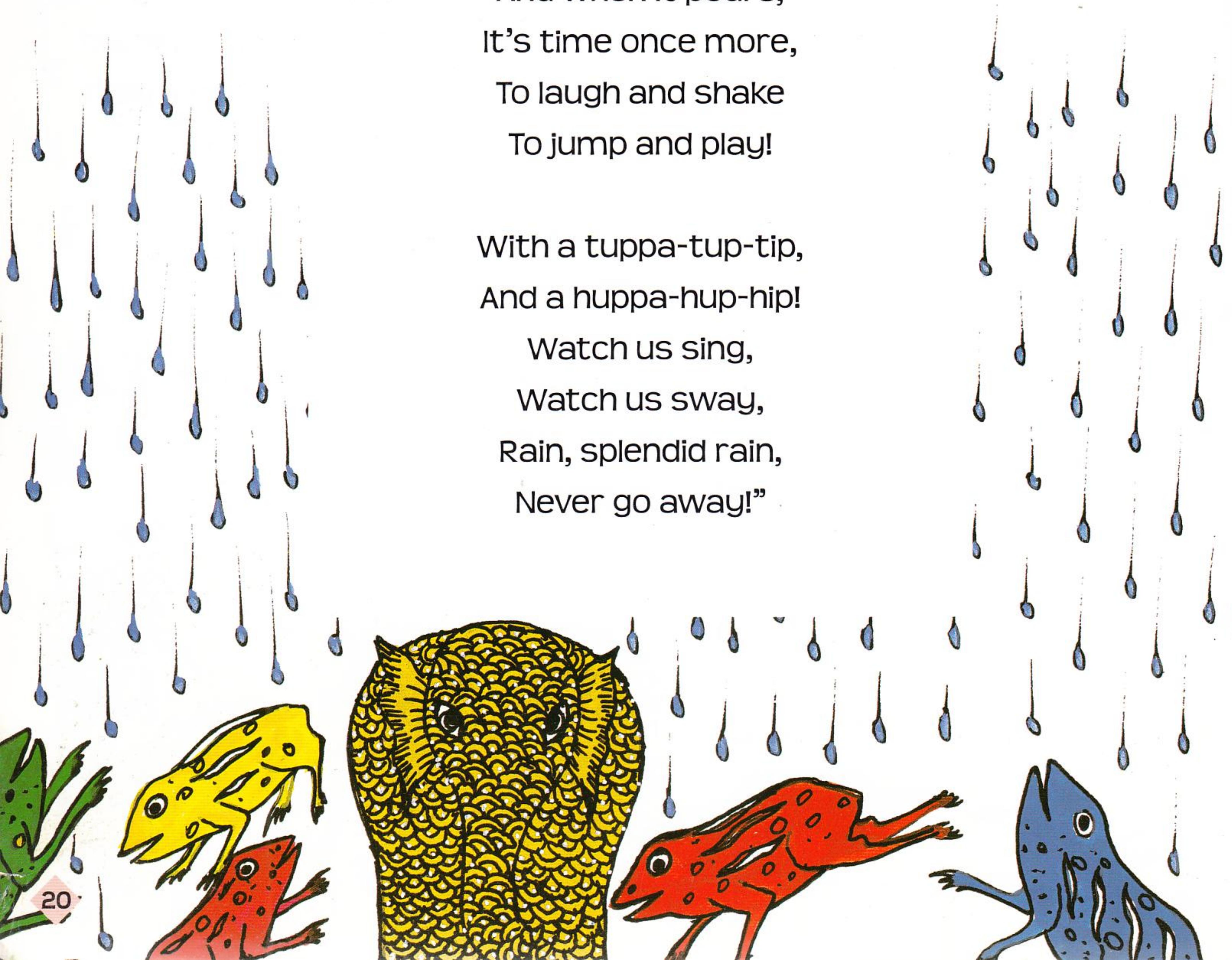
And as she watched them, Ambili moved closer and closer towards them and began to nod her head gently to the beat of their song. They sang:



“The Rain, the rain, the rain,
Tuppa-tip-top-tip
Huppa-hip-hop-hip,
We'll say it again and again,
We love to dance in the rain!

Clouds, clouds, clouds!
Dark and round and big,
Like fat, happy pigs
Look how they float by,
High, high, ever-so-high!

When they're sleepy,
Tired and drowsy,
They let the rain drop
With a tuppa-tip-top,
And a huppa-hip-hop!



And when it pours,
It's time once more,
To laugh and shake
To jump and play!

With a tappa-tup-tip,
And a huppa-hup-hip!
Watch us sing,
Watch us sway,
Rain, splendid rain,
Never go away!"



Ambili watched Maakadi and his friends dance and sing. The frog-song filled her mind, and made her want to hop too. She forgot to be scared. She was excited and happy, just like the frogs. She danced and jumped too with them. The rain wasn't so scary if you had friends to play with.

"Come on!" shouted one of the frogs, "Let's jump into the water."



One by one, the frogs jumped into a little pond nearby. BUDUK, KUDUKM-BUDUK! Ambili ran to join them. KER-BLADAAASH! She jumped in! And all the water and all the frogs splashed right out.

“Hee! Hee! Ho! Ha! Ha! Ha!” Ambili, Maakadi and all their friends rolled about in the grass and laughed and laughed and laughed.

All of a sudden, they heard Elsie Mol call out, “PROOANHH! Ambili! We are leaving. Come on.”

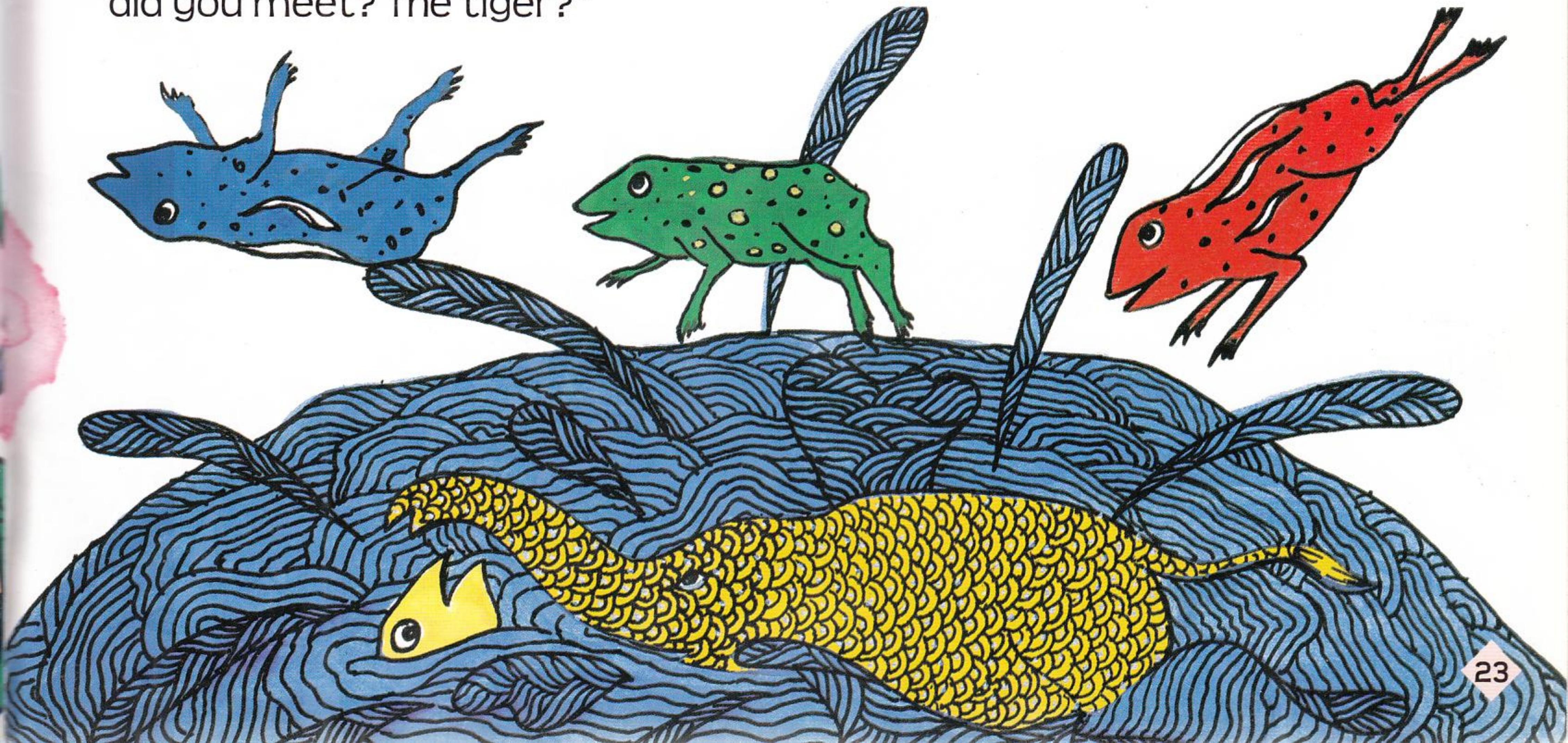


Ambili got up and waved good-bye to her new friends. She waddled up to her mother. Tapping Elsie with her trunk impatiently, she said, "Amma, Amma! I'm not scared of the rain anymore!"

Elsie looked down from her great height. She smiled and said, "Oh that's nice. How did it happen?"

"I met the king of the forest. And he..."

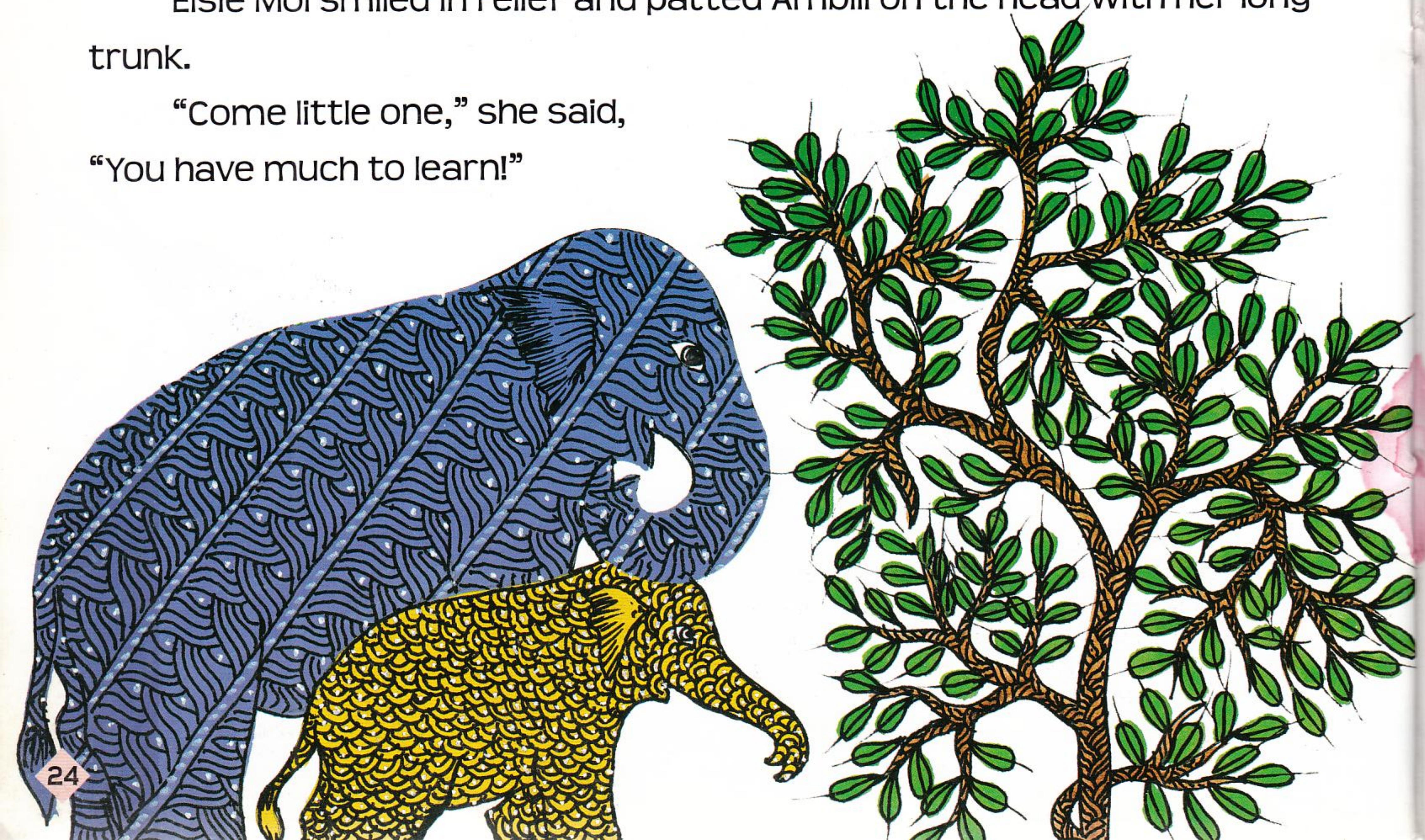
"You WHAT?!?" Elsie stopped and nearly trumpeted in alarm. "Who did you meet? The tiger?"



“No, Amma,” Ambili explained patiently. “I met the king of the forest – Maakadi the frog. And he said that I shouldn’t be frightened of the rain. He makes it rain when he is happy. He and his friends dance and sing in the rain. He is my friend.”

Elsie Mol smiled in relief and patted Ambili on the head with her long trunk.

“Come little one,” she said,
“You have much to learn!”



Ambili was just four days old when it began to rain heavily. Cold drops of water fell sharply on her and water flowed down her cheeks and trunk. She hid herself under her mother's tummy. An elephant baby and scared of the rains! Read all about how she learnt to love the rain.

Learning to read – level by level. This is a Level 2 book.

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